



MAYOR’S COLUMN

RESIDENTS OFFER VALUABLE INPUT  
A VISION FOR THE FUTURE IS TAKING SHAPE

By Mayor Gene Winstead

FOLLOWING WORLD WAR II, Bloomington’s leaders surveyed the many farm fields that were evolving into a traditional residential suburb and envisioned something that went well beyond what was then in vogue. Their dream resulted in Bloomington today – a vibrant, dynamic community centered on its 85,000 residents – taking advantage of its location astride the major surface and air transportation arteries of the metropolitan area. Bloomington has the metro area’s first rail transit in 50 years, a third of its land devoted to parks and open spaces, the largest employment concentration in the Twin Cities along I-494, and the largest retail and entertainment center in the nation.

A vibrant, dynamic Bloomington provides the tax base that supports excellent municipal services and high-quality public education. Including the School District, County, City and other taxing districts, Bloomington’s total property tax cost on the average single-family home ranks second lowest of Hennepin County cities with populations over 20,000. Data from the 2007 Citizen’s League Property Tax Review is incorporated in the *graph below*.

This early vision forms a great basis for moving Bloomington to a better, more sustainable future. Through participation in open houses and an online survey, hundreds of residents voiced their opinions on Bloomington’s future. These strategic initiatives came out of that community feedback:

1 Provide services in a cost-effective manner to maintain a safe and enhanced community.

Bloomington will remain a safe city through the hard work of a solid police force and fire department. Cities have learned that resident and business involvement in proactive public safety is critical to maintaining a safe community.

2 Undertake efforts to make Bloomington a more attractive community to a wider range of people.

The City will continue to improve services for the increasingly diverse interests of our residents, employees and visitors.

3 Protect and enhance natural resources, residential neighborhoods, and City and related infrastructure.

Residents are generally happy with their neighborhoods. Although homes, such as the ever-present rambler, are changing, they still have lots of life left. *See page 3.* We’ll see new families move into these homes and remodel them; seniors will discover that these one-level homes are perfect retirement dwellings.

Another important concern voiced by residents was preserving and enhancing our parks and open spaces. Both the Bloomington Athletic Association and organizations representing older residents will be strong partners and advocates for maintaining and improving our parks and open spaces, connecting community members along the way.

Many city streets were installed more than 50 years ago. The time is approaching when these streets will need to be reconstructed. Continuing initiatives, such as the Pavement Management Program, will identify problem areas and develop maintenance and replacement schedules for Bloomington’s aging streets.

4 Renew older commercial areas to promote a greater range of transportation options.

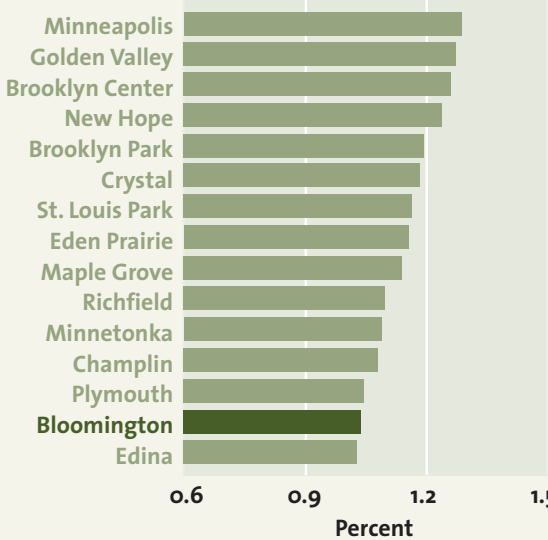
As we journey toward 2025, we will redevelop neighborhood commercial areas similar to the new France Avenue and Old Shakopee Road development. The completed Phase II of the Mall of America will have been a proven success and we’ll have moved toward Phase III.

We’ll also start to see more airport-oriented businesses build on the Mall’s success in the Airport South District.

As our commercial areas are transformed into high-density, mixed-use development, transportation options will expand. Bus service will improve, connecting to LRT and reducing the need for driving cars. The City will continue to advocate for State transportation investments on our 1960s-capacity freeways to lessen people’s urge to take shortcuts through South Hennepin County neighborhoods.

This visioning process has pointed us in the right direction to make these expectations a reality. It’s this vision of a future that will make us, 20 years from now, appreciate the work that we have done today – the results will form the foundation on which future community leaders will build their Vision 2050.

2007 SINGLE-FAMILY EFFECTIVE PROPERTY TAX RATE  
TOTAL PROPERTY TAX AS PERCENTAGE OF AVERAGE HOME’S VALUE



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The City of Bloomington complies with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its services, programs, or activities. Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all City of Bloomington services, programs, and activities. The City has designated coordinators to facilitate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and to coordinate compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations. For more information, contact the Human Services Division, City of Bloomington, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington, MN 55431-3027; (952)563-8733 (Voice); 952-563-8740 (TTY).

Upon request, this information can be available in Braille, large print, audio tape and/or electronic format.